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**Early Learning & Human Services  
Committee**

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**HB 2716**

**Brief Description:** Concerning working connections child care eligibility for vulnerable children.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Senn, Walsh, Kagi, Walkinshaw, McCabe, Ortiz-Self, Bergquist, Stanford, Gregerson, Ormsby and Goodman.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Directs the Department of Early Learning to adopt rules that would allow the following children to be eligible for Working Connections Child Care:
  - children who have received Child Protective Services child care within the prior six months and the case has been closed by the Department of Social and Health Services; and
  - children who have reunified with their biological family from an out-of-home placement within the prior six months.

**Hearing Date:** 1/26/16

**Staff:** Ashley Paintner (786-7120).

**Background:**

Working Connections Child Care.

The Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) program offers subsidies to child care providers serving families at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level. The state pays part of the cost of child care. The parents or caregivers are responsible for making a copayment to the child care provider. The Department of Early Learning (DEL) sets child care subsidy policy and provides the WCCC program oversight for child care licensing. The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) helps families apply for WCCC, determines eligibility and parent or caregiver copayments, authorizes child care, and issues payment to providers. Beginning July 1,

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

2016, authorizations for the WCCC program must be effective for a 12-month enrollment period, and the child may not be deemed ineligible due to a change in circumstance.

Child Protective Services Child Care and Child Welfare Services Child Care.

The DSHS administers several child care subsidy programs including Child Protective Services (CPS) child care and Child Welfare Services (CWS) child care. The CPS child care subsidy program provides short-term, time-limited subsidized child care for families that are currently involved in a CPS investigation by the Children's Administration (CA). The CPS child care subsidy must end when the case is no longer classified as a CPS case or is transferred to another program.

The CWS child care subsidy program provides short-term, time-limited subsidized child care for families to avoid out-of-home placement or other state intervention. The CA may authorize CWS child care for a family that has been through a CPS investigation and continues to participate with voluntary services, or for a family in crisis that needs care to avoid out-of-home placement or other state intervention.

**Summary of Bill:**

By December 1, 2017, the DEL must adopt rules, in accordance with federal law, that would allow the following children to be eligible for WCCC:

- children who have received CPS child care within the prior six months and the CPS case has been closed; and
- children who have reunified with their biological family from an out-of-home placement within the prior six months.

The DEL must develop a definition of "protective services" that would only apply for the purposes of WCCC eligibility and would not require the DSHS or the DEL to automatically consider these children to officially be in CPS. Additionally, the DEL is required to adopt rules that clarify that the DSHS's involvement with the family ends for purposes of CPS at the time the CPS case is closed.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on 1/21/16.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.